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Anime & Manga Monthly

ANIMERICA

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MONKEYIN' AROUND WITH **BUICHI**

Our candid interview with
SPACE ADVENTURE COBRA
creator Buichi Terasawa

MANGA FEATURE
X/1999 BY CLAMP



Letters from Our Readers

ANIMMESSAGES

REFLECTIONS IN A GOLDEN EYE

Continuing last month's "Message From the President," Streamline Pictures' own **CARL MACEK** had some sober reflections on the state of the industry to share with ANIMERICA's readers. Rather than trim down Mr. Macek's message to fit the "Message From the President" format, we decided to offer his comments this month in a special individual message. —The Editors

TO THE READERS OF ANIMERICA

As 1995 comes to an end, it is interesting to reflect on the relative success attained by anime and manga in the mainstream marketplace—with the end result being that what was once niche project has now become...*niche product*. The original reasons that the material was interesting to the true fan is now outweighed by an effort to maintain shelf space at local video stores. New players who don't have a clue regarding the history or significance of acquired products are entering the field. New projects are being announced at an alarming rate. The concept of bringing out the best that the anime community has to offer has been offset by the lure of quick money.

With all this, anime fans have been given the "bum's rush." Attempts to regulate illegal duplication and sale of bootleg or pirated video has left fandom with a bad taste in its collective mouth. Factionalism has become commonplace. What should have been a journey filled with joy and wonderment has become a cutthroat venue in which the value required and the value realized from various projects does not sync up.

It's a critical time for the continued success of anime and manga's relentless conquest of American pop culture. Will projects like **SAILOR MOON** and **DRAGON BALL** ever reach the mainstream acceptance of **BEAVIS & BUTTHEAD** or **TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES**? Hard to say. But realize that as soon as any of the perceived, high-profile projects aimed at mass audiences fail to bring in the required ratings, the diletantes who have latched onto anime will drop it like a hot potato.

Somebody once said that when a phenomenon has made it into **NEWSWEEK** or **TIME**, then it's over. Let's hope this is not the case for anime and manga.

Some sobering thoughts.

CARL MACEK • STREAMLINE PICTURES